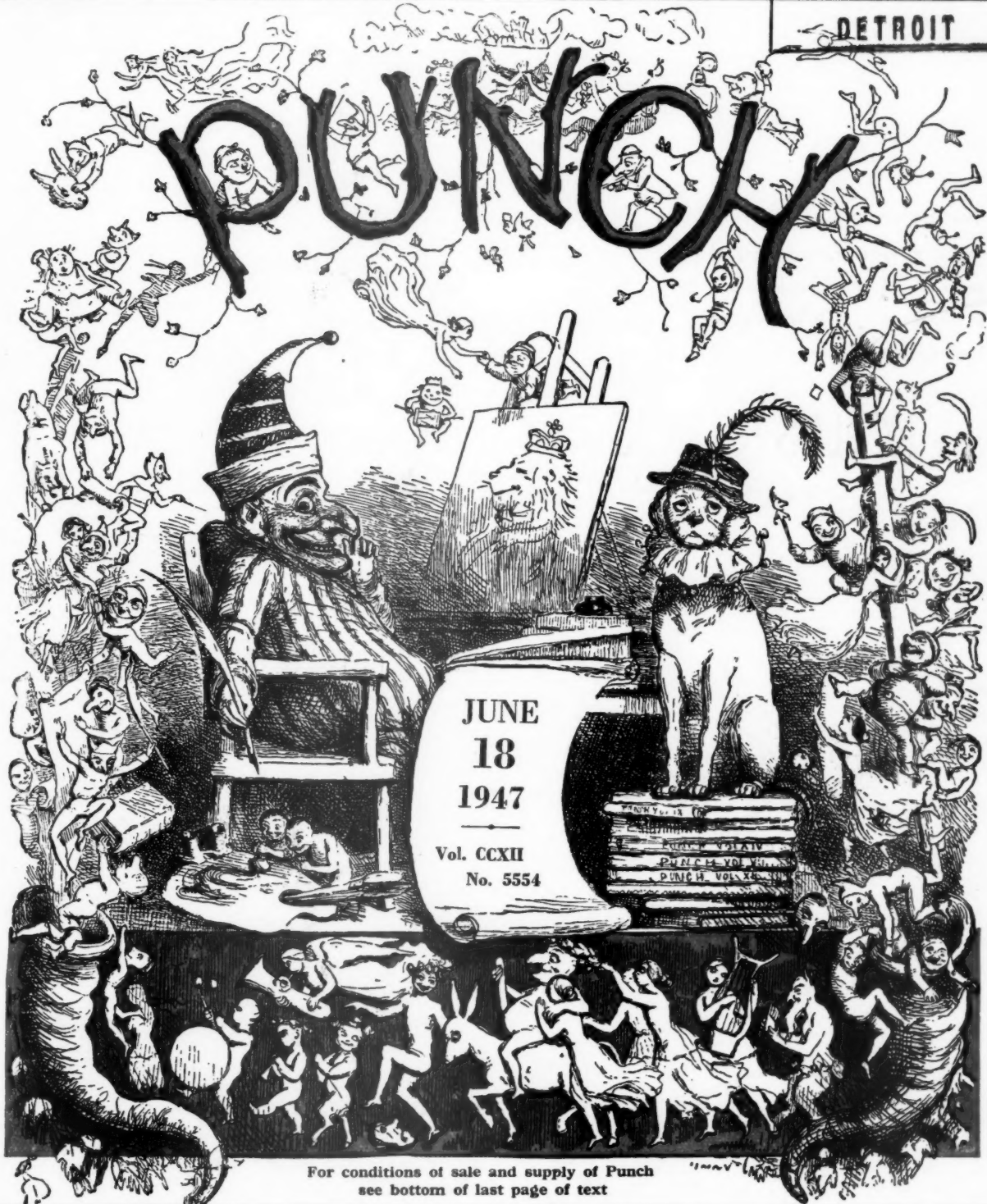


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JUL - 8 1947

DETROIT



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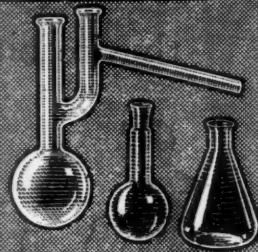
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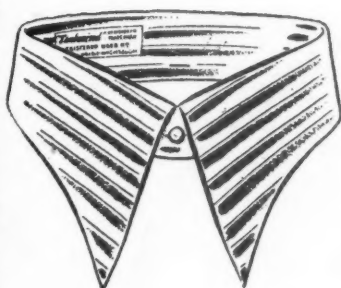
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JAMES A. JOBLING & CO. LTD.,
Wear Glass Works, SUNDERLAND.

P. 74



12-13 ST. GEORGE STREET, HANOVER SQUARE, LONDON, W.1. MAYFAIR 7444

start
trim
stay
trim
say



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The Rolex Oyster again comes to England

THE OYSTER, pride of the Rolex Company of Geneva and first water-proof watch in the world, will soon be arriving from Switzerland in small quantities. The thousands who bought Oysters before and during the war know that this is a watch that, for all its elegance of design, is as strong and unfailingly accurate as a ship's chronometer—a watch as right for the drawing-room as for the golf

course. The Rolex Oyster in stainless steel is a proud possession.

ANOTHER MEMBER of the Rolex family, the Tudor, also in stainless steel, is being imported in small but increasing quantities. The Tudor is the perfect watch for those who want a genuine Swiss movement at a lower price. Every watch bears the Rolex label of guarantee, proof positive of its reliability.

QUANTITIES are still very small, but the next few months will add both to the number of watches and the variety of models. Meanwhile, leading jewellers do have Rolex watches, and may be able to satisfy your long-felt desire to own one of the finest watches ever made in Switzerland.



The Rolex Oyster in Stainless Steel with leather strap (incl. pur. tax) £23.15s.
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Prices are subject to fluctuation.

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The Rolex Watch Co. Ltd., 1 Green St., Mayfair, London, W.1
(H. WILSDORF, Governing Director)

Owing to present-day conditions the repair service has been suspended. Its resumption will be announced.



DAMSON CREAM

Late Night Final, Limetail, White Heart Cherry, Whoopee, Creamy Egg Flip, New Yorker. Wonderful names for wonderful Cocktails. The war reduced the quantity available, but it never reduced the quality of

Maldano WINE COCKTAILS



Supplies are available in limited quantities from good wine merchants at the controlled price of 14/6d. a bottle.

Quick recovery from illness depends on raising the metabolic rate

*Scientific tests prove
Brand's Essence outstanding
in quickening metabolism*

WHEN we are recovering from illness, our vitality is at a low ebb. We lack energy, and sometimes even the will to get better.

This is because our *metabolic rate* is depressed. (Metabolism is the chemical process in the body-cells which maintains life by the breakdown and building-up of the products of digestion into energy, tissue, and warmth.)

If the metabolism of our bodies can be stimulated, listlessness disappears. We take on new strength and soon "turn the corner" towards complete recovery.

Light broths and meat-extracts will often do this. But scientific tests have proved Brand's Essence outstanding in quickening the metabolism. It contains 10% of meat protein and is rich in extractives, which give meat its flavour.

A few spoonfuls will stimulate a convalescent patient's appetite and quicken the metabolic rate so that the first step is made towards recovery.

From chemists and grocers, 3/- a jar.



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American Blend
COFFEE
FRESH AS THE HOUR
IT WAS PACKED
Tetley 1837

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Talcum Powder will
soothe the skin, keep
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TALCUM



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MADE BY MACONOCHIES

ST CHRIS HOSPITAL
Lembar
A word of discomfort
Much as we should like to encourage the hale, hearty and thirsty, we must ask them (as usual) to resign Lembar to people suffering the discomforts of 'flu, biliousness or acidosis. Lembar's good ingredients — pure lemon juice, barley, glucose and cane sugar — should be used only medicinally at present — so fill your glass with something else and drink to better times.
**RAYNER'S medicinal
Lembar**
Available in limited quantities.

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touch of the future

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FISH & MEAT PASTES
A Kingly Product!

Dogs prefer
SPILLERS
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people
have
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luck - he's got a

Don't grudge him his good fortune, he's probably waited patiently until his dealer could supply a Revelation suitcase. Your turn will come.

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CVS-95

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8-year-old flies Atlantic alone

"I want to be an air hostess"

SHE TELLS STEWARDESS

LORNA TAGGART was only eight. All on her own, she made a 3,000-mile flight by Clipper to see her grannie in Scotland. But she loved every minute of it—the comfort, the wonderful meals, the friendliness of all aboard.

As she left the giant Clipper at London Airport, Lorna waved goodbye to the stewardess. "I want to be an air hostess, too!" she cried, and her eyes sparkled as she added "on a Flying Clipper, of course!"

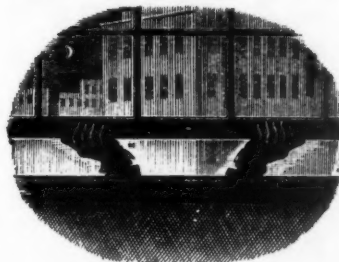


"Go by Flying Clipper when you go"

PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS

WINNER OF THE AVIATION SAFETY AWARD FOR 1946

It may be your window to-morrow

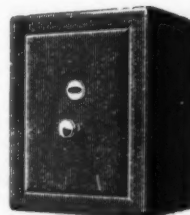


What are your weapons of defence?

The policeman is your defence *outside* your premises, but to rely on his watchfulness alone is to court disaster. Help yourself before the thief does by employing modern methods of defence *inside* your building.

Plan now for security against the burglar and your more fearsome foe—fire. Check the precautions you have taken to protect your money, your valuables, records and documents. Are your office, your warehouse, factory or shop sufficiently secure from attack?

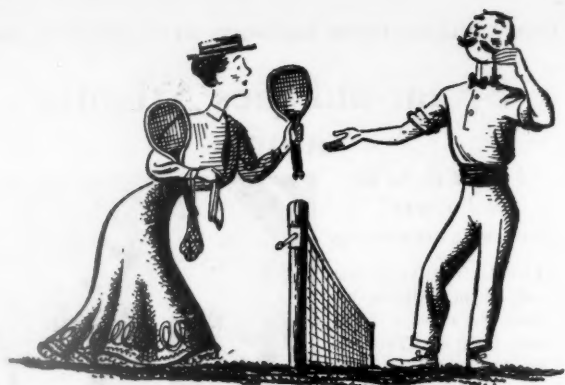
Ask Chatwood for advice. For many years they have been makers of equipment that defies the searching fingers of fire and thief. They supply the Chatwood "Duplex" Safe, Fireproof Safe Cabinets and Fireproof Filing Cabinets that bring security and peace of mind. Write today for particulars.



The Chatwood "Duplex" Safe for the Small Trader, Branch Shops and Private Householders. Secure against fire, fall and thief

CHATWOOD

THE CHATWOOD SAFE & ENGINEERING CO. LTD., SHREWSBURY



Come, hand me my eyeshade and racquets . . .
Now partner, keep out of my way
If you want to see how they play tennis
Down Wimbledon way.

You ask how I manage those smashes?
That service that no-one can play?
I've a secret that gives me advantage . . .
A Guinness a day.

There's nothing like a Guinness
except another Guinness

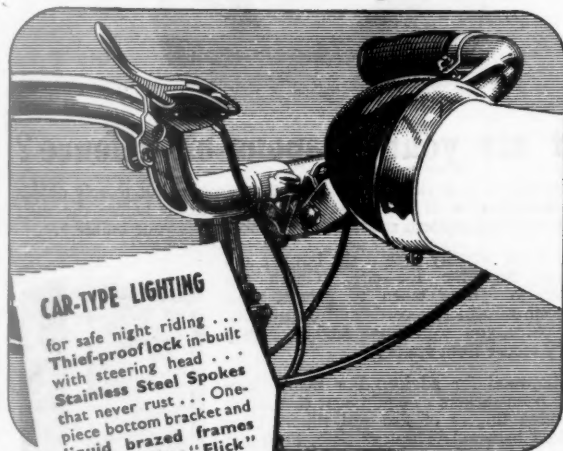


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It's UNBEATABLE!



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highways and byways. In leather of finest
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95/- and 9 coupons



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'Greys' will always appeal
to those smokers who ask
of a cigarette that it shall
be pleasant and satisfying.



Issued by Godfrey Phillips Ltd



PUNCH

or
The London Charivari



Vol. CCXII No. 5554

June 18 1947

Charivaria

We understand that as a result of some kindly words addressed by Mr. Morrison to one section of the community there has been a rush of landed proprietors to join the middle classes.

A correspondent says that her new maid proved so unsatisfactory in her first week that she was forced to give her two years' notice.



"Ready for delivery, 100 gross amusing post cards."
Cardigan paper.
Certainly not, thank you.

According to a gossip a certain newspaper celebrity was seen munching a chipolata in Fleet Street recently. At the same time, a man biting a sausage is not technically considered news.

It appears that some women in America are adopting Victorian-style dresses, and husbands over there hope this won't lead to a nation wide hook-up.

Chairborne Division Again

"Cook-General wishes quiet sit."

"Dundee Courier and Advertiser."

A naturalist points out that, owing to the very severe winter, there are now very few mosquitoes in this country. Some picnickers, in fact, have been heard to complain that they have not had a bite all day.

"What can we growers do," asks a farmer, "when pea-pickers demand double pay for each bag filled during the week-end?" Would doubling the size of the bags help?

Wrongful arrests always excite indignation in this country. There is much public sympathy for detained beetles found to be not from Colorado.

The Petrified Forest

"Through every avenue along which one proceeds in an effort to help there is nothing but stone walls."—From a Builder's letter.

A scientist points out that Newton had to learn the hard way. Of course it would have been even harder if he had been standing under a coconut palm.

Complaints have been made of people who cut racing results from newspapers in public libraries. This looks like the work of a cliptomaniac.

"In order to give the institute its entrance from Wainwright Street, the Public Works Department are constructing a bridge from the Dominions and the Colonial Empire could come if they wanted to investigate problems on microbiological research and that is what we are now aiming at."—Trinidad paper.

It seems enough to go on with.

A crustaceologist says there is one species of crab that does not move sideways. All other crabs, however, are firmly convinced that it does.



It's All Rather Confusing.

THE world is getting a little too complex for a moth-eaten old journalist like me.

I was never particularly knowledgeable about gramophones. But I could get along. I had no fear of the things, and knew well that there was one kind which could be played with the lid shut and another thinner kind, used in punts, which must have the lid open to do any good. I could put on records, change my own needles and wind the thing up single-handed when it began to moan and groan like a wounded hippopotamus. But I have in front of me here the specification, whatever that means, of a new radio gramophone, and it is abundantly clear to me that the procedure for extracting musical or other sounds from wax discs has now outstripped my powers.

I do not mind the fact that this radio gramophone has a self-balancing phase-splitter, a Frequency Response of ± 0.1 dB 20–20,000 c/s, and "suitable dividing networks." Given a response of that kind, some kind of phase-splitter is obviously desirable. Nor am I greatly troubled by the Scratch and Whistle Filter (this is a sharp cut-off 3 section m-derived low pass filter introducing insertion loss of 40dB minimum, for those who care to make a note), nor by the ingenious "cathode follower driver transformer coupled to four power triodes operated in Class A parallel push-pull with additional negative feedback." I don't say that I have a clear picture in my mind of a Class A parallel push-pull, unless it is some kind of revolving door, but my conviction is that this part of the apparatus, together with the dividing networks and the Scale Distortion Compensator and the two-channel microphone pre-amplifier, would be pushed away somewhere right out of sight in the interior of the machine. I cannot believe that the owner is expected to watch negative feedback actually going on.

No such encouraging reflection occurs to me when I come to the Tone Control System.

"This has been designed to permit individual adjustment of the loudness levels of five overlapping frequency bands covering the whole range from ultra bass to upper treble. It becomes therefore as simple a matter to restrict the response of the instrument to any desired degree . . . as it is to introduce boost in any part of the frequency spectrum."

If a shadow of doubt remained in my mind that I should be expected to take some action about all this, it would be exploded by the next sentence, which speaks of a special lever control unit, "the lever being mounted in a bank of five, in ascending frequency ranges." No doubt the modern child of twelve is prepared to stand in front of this bank of levers and flick them up and down with the aplomb of a marine engineer. But I know my limitations; I am not altogether sorry to have grown up in the days of the old ten-inch portable; and I cannot help wondering what my father would have said if he had caught any of us trying to introduce boost into the frequency spectrum.

It seems rather ungenerous, after quoting so freely from the specification of this remarkable radio gramophone (and I have mentioned barely a tithe of its accomplishments), not to give its name. But all I can say is that it was exhibited at the British Industries Fair, that its manufacturers live less than ± 0.1 mm. from Kensington and that they somewhat unkindly, just when you have got the principle of the apparatus firmly fixed in your mind, "reserve the right to change the specification without notice." So for all I know the push-pull in your model may not be parallel at all.

I have purposely kept back to the end what strikes me as the outstanding feature of this machine: "A large auditorium speaker, capable of handling peaks without distress" (remark the manufacturers casually) "has accordingly been provided."

Read "pekes" for "peaks" and you have, it seems to me, the sort of woman who would have been in her element at the Albert Hall the other day.

* * * * *

Muddle-headedness in the face of an electro-acoustic instrument may perhaps be pardoned, but to get confused between the Antique Dealers' Fair at Grosvenor House and the Conservative Exhibition at Dorland Hall is inexcusable. Hence the coolness of the attendant's reply at the latter place when I asked whether it was true they were showing nothing later than 1830. "You may be thinking of the bust of William Pitt," he said, deftly selling me a programme, "but I can assure you the photograph of Aneurin Bevan is quite modern." As a matter of fact I had been thinking of the sword of Queen Theodelenda of Lombardy (ob. A.D. 628), but remembered in time that this must be at Grosvenor House. The "Trust the People" Exhibition is a quieter affair than I had hoped, or feared. There was no crowd of Communist desperadoes saying "Tchah!" in front of The Industrial Charter (Section N); nor for that matter was there a crowd of Conservatives throwing their freshly-laundered nightcaps in the air. The British League of Housewives were not (at any rate while I was there) desperately defending Lord Woolton's likeness against determined attempts by Sir Hartley Shawcross to smear his weekly margarine ration over it.

Mention of Lord Woolton reminds me that he said good-bye to me very nicely (on the telephone) on my way out. "Good-bye," he said, "and thank you for coming." If I could have answered him (but that is not arranged for), I think I should have said, "Look, my Lord. If you really want to show me the way to a Free Britain, do you think the best way to go about it is to charge me a shilling to get in?"

But I expect I am getting confused again.

* * * * *

A note appeared under the cartoon on page 475 of the issue of *Punch* for June 4th to the effect that the National Association of Teachers had called attention to a serious shortage of paper in schools.

But they hadn't. There is no such body. There is, in fact, a serious shortage of National Associations of Teachers—though they have their Unions and Societies. And the present, while we are on the subject of confusion, seems a good time to apologize to the National Association of Head Teachers for thus rudely decapitating them. If only we had been fitted with a Distortion Compensator this sort of thing could never have happened. H. F. E.

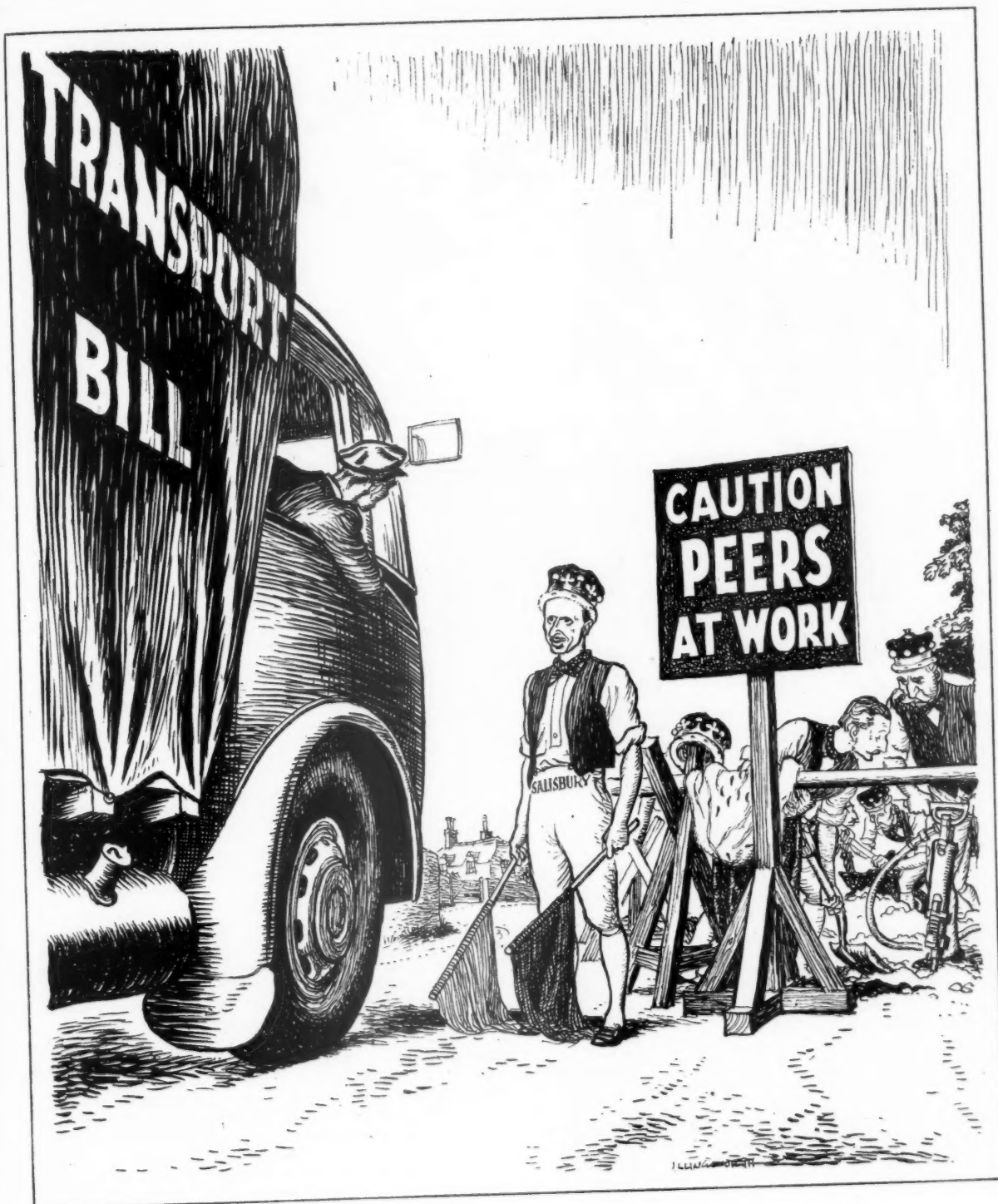
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A Cap With a Fit?

"PUT out the light!" thou criest, and we do.
Yet watch thy ways, right honourable sir,
For we can quote from our *Othello* too.

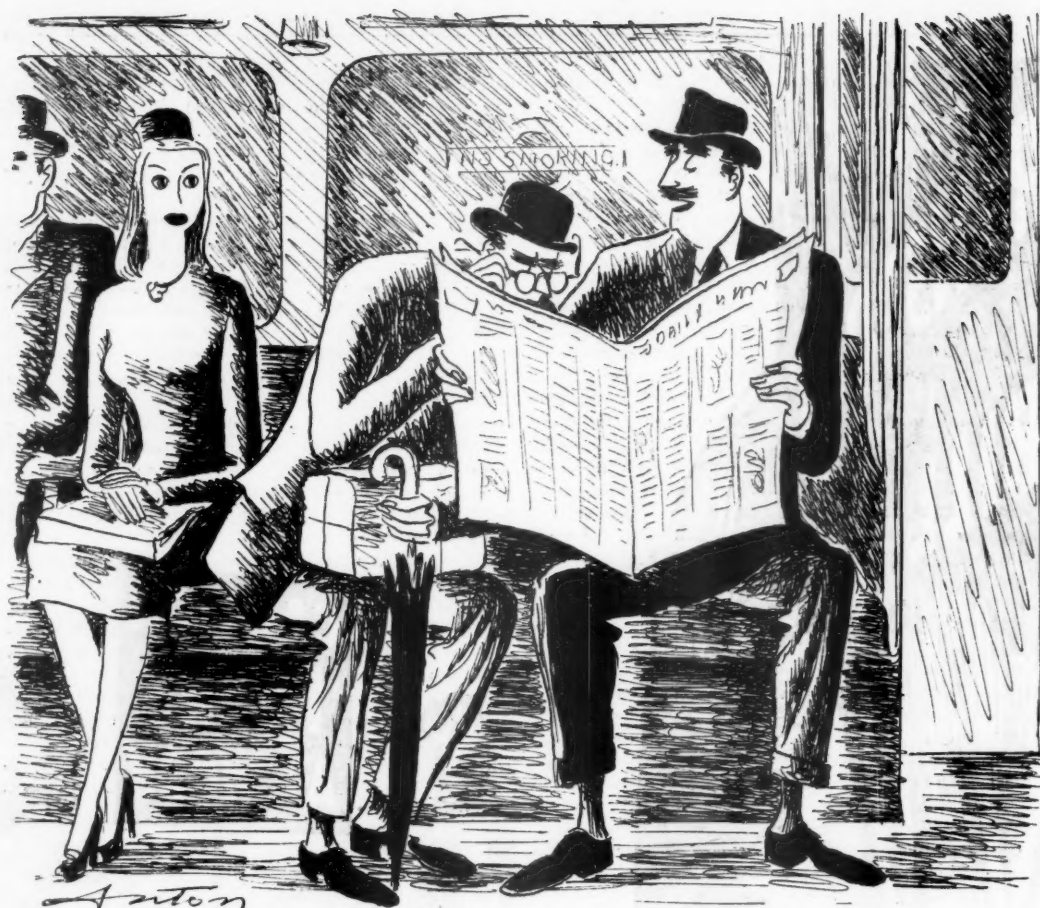
Does not the line just after that refer
To "quenching thee, thou flaming minister"?

M. H. L.



THE AMENDERS

"Keep your shirt on, mate. We're only trying to iron out the bumps for you."



"May I have my glasses back now?—I get out at the next station."

Still More Remarks

NOTICING a newspaper controversy about whether animals are happy or not, I thought my readers might like a few remarks on this very interesting subject; and in beginning by stating boldly that animals are happy when they look happy, I am not being irrational so much as mindful of all the people who feel hurt when a dog fails to notice that the cushion in its basket has a clean cover. You could hardly expect people who think like this to believe that a dog rebounding madly from wall to wall because it has heard the word "Walkies" is not at least a moderately happy dog. Funnily enough, when a dog achieves its walk it does not look nearly so happy; it tends to concentrate, and to pass its owner without recognition. Still, we may be pretty sure that dogs do enjoy their walks, because it would be awfully dishonest, as well as ungrateful, if after all that fuss they didn't.

Other occasions a dog enjoys are when someone accidentally drops a piece of chocolate, when it gets back on an arm-chair it has just been turned out of, and when someone it wasn't sure liked it sees fit to scratch behind its ear.

Of the innumerable small occasions when dogs feign unhappiness I shall mention only those profitless minutes every dog-owner has spent trying to persuade that creeping misery, a dinner-shunning dog, what a treat it is missing.

Cats are happy when they purr. I bet those cat-lovers who were expecting me to be appropriately subtle about their mysterious pets had forgotten that. Horses like putting their heads over gates—the length and angle of their neck and the distance from neck to chin making the average gate a fine neck-rest for the average horse—and eating out of nosebags, though it is probable they find the bits out of reach at the bottom as annoying as we should. Cows keep to an even emotional keel, no one having any idea whether they lie down as a rest from standing up or stand up to stretch their legs. Hens, on the other hand, live in a constant ferment of which the highlight is someone with a bucket. Parrots are about as happy as dramatic critics who have seen through their job; that is, they don't think much of their surroundings but keep a sharp lookout and know their own publicity value. With animals

like giraffes we reach the realm of speculation. All we can say is that they must by now have got used to finding the world shorter than it is to us, and that up there they are being as happy or as unhappy as they would be anyway.

SO much for that. Now I want to change the subject completely and say a few words on what I may call indirect shopping, or what happens when people go shopping for others; I mean when they go shopping for themselves and ask the others if they want anything. The first result is some advance gratitude, humanity having a very soft spot in its heart for anyone who will produce for it the effect of having shopped without the attendant hardships, so that anyone suggesting this while drinking coffee would be poured the last cupful without demur and would find it as cold and murky as last cups of coffee are. Some people make their shopping requests into lists, and the fact that when making lists we are conscious of our handwriting leads me to deviate for a moment into this revealing aspect of human nature. To make out a list for someone we haven't known for long calls for our best handwriting as never before. Some people think well enough of their handwriting to need to do no more than exaggerate it and get the margin straight, but others have basic faults which they hope they may iron out by trying, but even as they strive they realize that to anyone who hasn't seen their handwriting before it is going to look rather as it does to them when they aren't trying; for another person's handwriting is as strange, arbitrarily come by and yet inevitable as another person's face.

Another thing about shopping-lists is that at the moment of being handed over they always look rather tiny and losable. The spoken shopping-request is noteworthy for the pathetic way the speaker, after a small speech on what to ask for if they haven't got it, or if they haven't got that either, suddenly retracts and says don't bother, it doesn't really matter. As for the homecoming of the shopper, this is noteworthy for the specialized interest of the well-comers, and the nice way they take disappointment; while the shopper on the job is noteworthy for a tendency to confide in the shop-assistant that this bit is for someone else.

THE other day—to change the subject again—I was telling you about funny actors, but I didn't have the space to mention revues, or as those out for a high standard in language call them, *revues*. (People wondering why I emphasize the last word in that sentence have sadly missed the point and must sit back and think before going on.) Revues consist of a number of songs, dances and little plays performed by the same people all through; this gives the audience a cosy feeling as of watching charades without having to worry about their turn coming next, and a spirit of comradeship which ensures a good proportion of joke-seeing, so that the relation of audience to actors is perhaps more satisfactory in revues than in anything else you pay fifteen-and-six for the front rows of. Many revues end with everyone on the stage at once; this may be for the audience to check up that no one has got tired and gone home early, or it may just be that that is how revues ought to end and therefore do. Actually the audience never needs to check up because by the time it has mastered the programme it could pass an exam. on the cast.

Another feature of revues is an occasional ballet to remind the audience how cultured it is nowadays; another is a free use of both sides of the curtain; another is that song-and-dance stuff against an exotic background. (By exotic I mean a foreign place where the weather is

always fine, and so does everyone else. No one, whatever the dictionary addicts say, would call the North Pole exotic.) This is the sort of thing most members of the audience feel they should be enjoying as much as the others must be; psychologists say that what most people really like to see on the stage is a humble, untidy room with someone up a step-ladder, but that the self-respect of the management must be considered.

TALKING about charades just now reminds me that a few words on this deeply-rooted activity might not come amiss. Everyone knows how you play charades: you get divided into two sides, with yourself on the very slightly weaker side, and you alternately act and watch. A few stubborn people are allowed to watch all the time if their attitude threatens to spoil the evening, but it is not so easy to be exempted as the border-line types hope when they agree to play. The point about charades is supposed to be guessing a hidden word; but this in practice is rather incidental, because the audience will be just as appreciative either way. The real point about charades is that the people who like acting can show off, the people who like dressing up can do wonders with visitors' coats, the people the house belongs to know of an old pogo-stick, someone will upset a jug of water, and after it is all over any other game suggested will seem well within everyone's powers. As for the dumb sort of charade, with people doing things that rhyme with something, this is a much simpler affair calling only for clarity of intention and a firm grasp of the alphabet; and all I want to say about it is that the characters tend to come on in order of keenness, and that the slackers can, if they lag behind, get out of most scenes altogether, whereas in an ordinary charade they will be lucky to get away with the traditional slacker's rôle—that of someone sitting and reading a newspaper as a substitute for scenery.

Top Secret

"Qualified Nurse wanted in doctor's house near London, where there are two resident patients. The patients are not ill at present..."—Advt. in "Nursing Mirror."



"Of course topiary isn't my only hobby."

An Innocent in Britain

(Mr. Punch's special correspondent is on tour to find out how the land lies for visitors from overseas.)

II—London for a Start

THE facts are these. About 150,000 tourists are expected to visit Britain this year, more than half of them from the United States and Canada. They will reach our shores and move quietly inland, stay for about a month of what is known technically as "the season," and return as ambassadors to their native lands. Now each tourist will spend on the average about \$500 or £125, so that . . . let's see, 150,000 times 100 would be . . . no, that is quite the wrong way to consider this matter: I ought to be ashamed of myself. Let me try again—150,000 at one dollar apiece would be £37,500, so that . . . Don't forget to check your answer by working backwards.



"No, Miss Franklin, THAT is flying-bomb damage."

My first important interview, after consulting the Travel Association and discovering that London is usually the transatlantic tripper's initial objective, was with the managing director of a mammoth hotel in Mayfair. I had to flash a lot of passes and references at the outer screen of flunkys and porters and the inner screen of hotel detectives and under-managers, but eventually I got through and reached the nerve-centre himself. He was writing furiously when I was shown in—menus, I think.

It was my fault that the interview began badly, for I had forgotten to remove my cycle-clips.

"I was wondering . . ." I began.

"No, nothing," he said. "We have a possible vacancy for a fourth commissioner, but you seem a bit on the small side . . ."

"I'm not looking for . . ." I said, laughing.

"Oh! I beg your pardon. But we haven't a room or a bath in the place. For advance bookings please see Mr. Tyrrell, third door on the left."

It was a long and tiresome business steering the conversation into a productive channel, but with a few cigarettes, a word or two disparaging the colossal rival establishment across the street and the deft removal of the cycle-clips, I managed it.

"What do the Americans want to see most?" I asked.

"Bomb-damage, Socialism, the Bankside site and souvenirs—in that order."

"Souvenirs?"

"Yes, coat-hangers, ash-trays, spoons . . ."

"I say, that's rather a problem, isn't it?"

"No, we try to look upon it as an invisible export. It means dollars of course."

"Are they satisfied with the bomb-damage?"

"Well, no, not exactly. Some of them think we don't make enough of it. One gentleman from Chicago wants to see facsimile reproductions of every bomb that fell suspended over the city from invisible wires—as a permanent memorial."

"Lit up at night, I suppose. What about food?"

"They object to tea: won't have it that scalding hot tea's the most cooling drink in a heat-wave."

"Always wanting ice, eh?"

"Yes, don't realize that it's terribly over-heating."

"They must find our rationing an awful trial."

"No, we do all the book-keeping for them: all they have to do is eat the stuff."

"Do they complain?"

"Not a whimper. There are one or two things they do complain about though—the way a maid (not in this hotel) will bang on the door at eight o'clock of a Sunday morning and shout 'If you want any breakfast it'll be off in twenty minutes'; the fact that half the B.B.C.'s programmes seem to be imported from the United States; and the Londoner's unflagging pride in the Underground."

At this point the managing director received news that a boat-train was about to leave for Southampton and he hurried away to count the towels.

With such pitifully inadequate advice as I had gleaned from this interview and a few feverish impressions won by a last-minute cycle-tour I sat down to write my guide to London.

Where should we start? Ramon Keppler began his tour, if you remember, at the Railway Inn, Dagenham, moved on to the "Seven Stars" in Woolwich, the "Grapes" in Camberwell, the "Wheatsheaf" at Acton . . . and so on until he reached the "Bricklayer's Arms" in Hackney. E. V. Lucas started from No. 1 London, the house at Hyde Park Corner which once belonged to the great Duke of Wellington. Let us be different, eh?

Take a number seventy—er—no, you'd better ask . . . and book to Battersea Bridge. You are now looking at the Thames. Don't be put off by the size: it used to be much, very much wider. But we are not really interested in mere size, so we allowed the buildings to wade in from both banks and stay put. Mind you, any time we wanted to . . . Now, look down at that tug with its convoy of six lighters, at the colliers and barges dashing upstream on the tide with coal for the Chelsea Power Station. You hear the rough music of their engines and the gruff directives of the bargees, and you turn away. There may easily be a tear at the corner of your eye as you recall that about

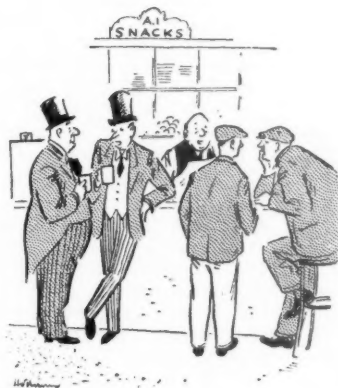
eight thousand barges ply on the Thames with an average capacity of 250 tons.

But we can't stay here all day. So for a few last seconds let the impressive facts race unhindered through your mind. Here they are—sixty per cent. of London's water supply comes from the Thames (and you're quite wrong if you think "Ah, so that's why it's narrower!"), the wharfinger companies conduct an immense entrepôt trade, Cambridge won this year's boat-race, and Wordsworth wrote his famous sonnet on just such another bridge as this.

From Battersea it is quite a step to Alletson's Snack Bar in Fenchurch Street, where you can rub shoulders with top-hatted City men, brush up your commerce and fortify yourself with a good cup of British coffee and a bun (seven cents) before your visit to the Tower. This is just around the corner.

The Tower of London (phone, ROYal 6593) stands astride the old Roman wall which is almost two thousand years old. A piece of this wall can be seen on the left here. Feel the quality. Other pieces form outcrops in various parts of the City—in the churchyards of St. Alphage and St. Giles, in the General Post Office . . . Certainly, you can kill two birds with one stone, Mrs. Upscheider . . . and on Tower Hill.

Over there, ladies and gentlemen, is the Wakefield Tower which contains the Crown Jewels . . . Yes, I know it's spotting, but we'll be going inside in just one moment. There we can see the Black Prince's ruby, four pearls worn by Queen Elizabeth and Edward the Confessor's sapphire. No, Miss Franklin, *that* is flying-bomb damage. Before we visit the White Tower, built by William the Conqueror in 1066 without any assistance from the ministries of Health or Works, let us walk over to Tower Hill and examine the stone slab marking the site of the old chopping-block . . . Oh, yes, lots—Anne Boleyn, Lady Jane Grey



" . . . brush up your commerce . . . "

and Katherine Howard, I'm sorry to say. If you really must have a souvenir, Mrs. Upscheider, I should wait until this beefeater has gone by. Thank you. Well, yes, I suppose he does remind one of Charles Laughton a bit, now you mention it. Now is there anything else you want to know before we pass on? The time? Certainly, Mrs. Franklin . . .

A bit of geography, a bit of history—what next? Sport. Well, we can offer you cricket, tennis, racing, dogs, rowing, boxing . . . practically everything. Visit any of our great

centres of sport—Wimbledon, Kempton Park, Wembley, Harringay, Lord's, the Oval, etc., and you will be astounded to discover what good losers we are. But practice makes perfect, I suppose. Many of our great sporting events take place in the first half of the year, so you will be too late to see us lose the Walker Cup, the Amateur golf championship, the Oaks, the Derby, various boxing contests



" . . . a friend capable of explaining the game . . . "

and the Davis Cup. But there are still the Test matches with South Africa, the Ascot races and Wimbledon.

My old friend, the Travel Association's Calendar, explains that to enjoy the cricket at Lord's or the Oval "a sunny day and a friend capable of explaining the game should be chosen." I am not at all happy about this. I should be inclined to let a sunny day speak for itself and leave the explanation until after lunch when the rain drives us into the pavilion or the Tavern. And what's this about "a friend" doing the explaining? I can't let that pass. Explaining cricket to foreigners has ruined more budding friendships and caused more international friction than all the *rapprochements* put together.

Now, for the sake of the ladies, let us turn to shopping. If your stay is less than two months you will get no clothing coupons, and there's not really much of a black market to fall back on. But you can buy many things coupon-free—hats, wooden-soled shoes, artificial flowers, belts, bathing-caps, hair-nets . . . Oh, lots of gorgeous things. If you *are* staying for two months "clothing coupons will be issued, less a number proportionate to the expired time of the period covered by the book." Got it?

If you want to do a bit of queueing try first somewhere like Knightsbridge or Kensington where elbows are blunt and the forward movement is relatively rapid. Then work up gradually through Piccadilly and Regent Street until you are tough enough for Oxford Street.

Finally, a word of explanation. It may be that you will be tempted to buy the goods (merchandise) of someone standing on the pavement (sidewalk). Don't be alarmed, don't feel insulted, if he suddenly shuts his portmanteau (grip) and hurries away round a corner. He's not anti-American or anything silly like that. He's just an impulsive character who's decided that it is healthier round the corner. He's a spiv (jerk?) and there are thousands of him in London.

But he is virtually unknown in the provinces, whither I shall conduct you next week. Hod.

Through the Hoop at Olympia

The Royal Tournament

IF you have a friend who has been getting depressed lately about poor old doomed Britain, try to get him along to Olympia before June 28th. You may have a job to find him a seat, but when you do it will be worth it just to see him standing up in it and yelling—and deciding not to emigrate after all. There is no bristling militarism, I don't mean that; unless you count some glittering 1947 motor-cycles, the only modern implement of destruction is the new short bayonet; it's just that the Tournament could only happen here, and as long as it does I personally can look the world right in the eye.

Olympia is so vast that the spectator is at first afraid of missing one thing while watching another, especially as the scale of the displays matches it. When the Commandos climbed their sixty-foot cliff, hanging on by their teeth, the tail of my eye caught an object hurtling earthwards: only a coil of rope, but oh! my poor heart. And when a hundred young Tarzans are rocketing over vaulting-horses in four parts of the arena at once, it is only human to fear that if one of them makes a mess of it you may not see it. But the stage-managers have in fact provided for this, and displays involving large numbers are split up into duplicated sections; the audience soon gets used to applauding the group moved nearly under its own nose, and at the end of the physical-training display by the Navy, Marines and Army—the R.A.F. had one to itself later on—four star performers shot simultaneously through four paper-covered hoops, and everyone was satisfied.

One amusing affair was a Toy Soldier display by fifteen-year-olds of the Army Apprentice School; the lads had fine chests on them for their age, and I imagine they may have been rebellious about wearing make-up (one scarlet blob per cheek-bone), but their precise evolutions suggested that they would grow up to be real soldiers in no time. The illusion of being impelled by clockwork was bravely maintained, even to their collapse in rotation when the whole company was mown down by a single round from a small golden cannon . . . so that even the sad spectacle of their red coats prone and symmetrical in the dust brought a burst of applause. They got a special burst as they marched off from some fellow red-coats—the party of Chelsea Pensioners, spruce and scrubbed in the stalls opposite the Royal Box.

These infants in arms came a good

second in smartness to the King's Squad, Royal Marines, who gave a display of close-order arms drill that ought to earn every man a late pass for a month when his present tour of duty is over. It included a highly dramatic effect (be warned) when a volley of blanks was loosed off over the unsuspecting heads of the spectators. The programme referred to this, as we all found too late, as a *feu de joie*, but it gave no *joie* to young members of the audience, who raised a hundred startled bleats and for some time would not be comforted. The ears in front of me had a couple of small fingers at the ready for the rest of the afternoon.

I don't know whether the R.A.F. gymnasts who followed felt any discomfort, prancing spiritedly in thin plimsolls on all those ejected cartridge-cases. If they did, their upper lips were a match for it. Risking their blushes, I must report that they were undoubtedly the handsomest bunch of the day, faces, forms and all, and it was hard on them, I think (knowing all the old jokes about Air Force organization), to call their turn a display of free exercises "and maze movements." They'll be an age living it down in their messes. I mustn't forget to say, in view of this, that they put up a smashing show.

The Riding and Driving Display (R.A.S.C.) brought us our first sight of horses—walking, trotting, jumping, answering the merest breath on the reins and forming into intricate patterns at a change in the music or the sound of a whistle, and no doubt wrestling a sigh from many an old cavalryman for the days that are no more. I thought at first that they were even being clever enough to march to the music, then realized that owing to natural limitations only half a horse can be in step at one time . . . The only other equestrian event was less satisfactory, though only from the "production" point of view. This Trick Riding Display (Army Remount and Veterinary Services) gave us soldiers disguised as cowboys and Indians—the latter in highly unorthodox war-paint, and I believe one brave had a moustache.

The intention, no doubt, was to introduce a lighter note—but I don't think the audience had felt the want. There were gleams of spontaneous humour here and there, and no more was needed: the terrified passenger in the wheel-less sidecar during the skilful motor-cycle display by the Royal Signals; and, in the same event, the twelve soldiers successively thumbing

a lift on a single overburdened machine, and being borne from the arena in attitudes of characteristic nonchalance. There was laughter, too, when the Commandos sent a German prisoner (or did I mistake the uniform?) winging down on a wire from their cliff-top like a bewildered pantomime fairy, and flung his hat patronizingly after him.

Airmen recruits of the Advanced Drill Course at Halton went through some competent drill, to the music of their own Pipe Band, and immaculate though they were to the last crease, boot and button, I couldn't help feeling that the promised newly-designed uniforms cannot be issued too soon . . . a dashing young Service deserves something a little less thick and drab. The ceremonial dress, now, which the Central Band wore to play for the display of free exercises (and maze movements), is by contrast splendid.

A favourite old feature of the Tournament probably remains its biggest piece of showmanship—the manhandling of naval field-guns. Its appeal is heightened because it takes the form of a competition between rival gun-crews, consisting of an obstacle race in which they dismantle their guns (weight, one ton), transport them and themselves by aerial railway to the other end of the arena, assemble and fire them. The present record time is three minutes, forty-eight seconds, including rolling out of the way those sailors who have been hit over the head by whizzing scaffold-poles or had a one-ton gun dropped on their foot. (No, it didn't happen, but there's an outside chance that it may when *you* go.) The programme note says "There is nothing the Navy cannot do." After watching this I wouldn't care to bring a charge of boastfulness.

Like the organizers, I have kept the best till last. After dare-devil antics on motor-cycles, horses spurred through blazing hoops (a trifle by the R.A.S.C. I forgot to mention), cliff-scaling, gun-hauling and all the other sensations, the programme item "Massed Pipes and Dancing by Highland Regiments" may look a little dull on paper. I need hardly say that it isn't. This is more than a spectacle, and if there were some moist eyes in the audience they were not all due to the ordeal of fifteen minutes' uninterrupted bagpipe music; we got just an inkling of something experienced in Tripoli once.

Altogether, as I say, if you have a friend who has been getting depressed lately . . .

J. B. B.

Bacon

TO a bachelor there are few more thrilling moments in the week than those when he is engaged in choosing his weekly ration of bacon. My own grocer, if I go early enough on Monday morning, has a very wide choice to offer. First there are neat piles of rashers lined up in military fashion on a glass shelf. Some of them have obviously been cut on Saturday and have a rather faded and wilted look, and the grocer tries to persuade me to have these, not by any sort of intimidation, but rather like a conjurer forcing a card. Sometimes while I am still making up my mind he will throw two or three rashers thoughtfully on the scales, weighing as much as two-and-a-half ounces instead of the two ounces to which I am entitled. He then gives me a brazen look suggesting that *he* is quite willing to break the law if *I* am. Sometimes I yield to temptation, but usually I am firm.

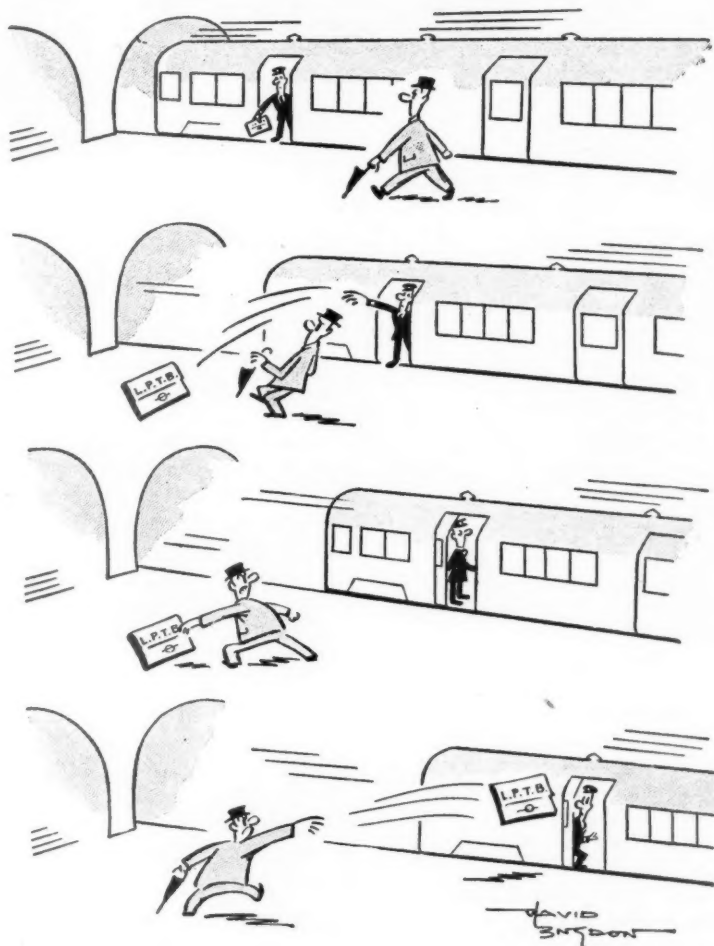
I examine the fresher and shinier piles of rashers, and there are a great many pros and cons to be considered before coming to a final decision. If I choose small thin rashers I shall get three or even four of them, but I am pretty certain to get only my exact two ounces. If, on the other hand, I point to a pile of large fat rashers I shall get only one, but the odds are in favour of my making at least a quarter-ounce profit, as it is unlikely that there will be a rasher weighing exactly two ounces. And my grocer knows me too well to try to give me a rasher weighing only an ounce-and-three-quarters and to throw in a fat piece of rind for the balance. He attempted this on one occasion, but he won't soon forget the look I gave him.

More often than not I decline the piles of ready-cut rashers altogether and insist on having my ration cut on the spot from one of the lumps or slabs of bacon standing on the marble shelf by the wall. I used to insist on the very thinnest cut, and the first week I got seven rashers, very thin and almost as transparent as Cellophane. They looked grand while raw, but their behaviour in the pan was disquieting in the extreme, as they shrank immediately to a tenth of their original size. So now I choose thicker and smaller rashers, of which I get two or three. One week, by leaning my elbow negligently on the part of the scales that held the weights I got six, but it does not do to try that sort of thing too often.

Having arrived home with the

bacon I plan carefully how to put it to the best advantage, and the programme I map out subtly reflects my mood. When I am in a despairing mood and the morrow simply does not seem to matter, I hurl the entire two ounces straight into the pan and consume it with reckless bravado in one gargantuan feast. If I am in a careful and calculating mood I lay the rashers symmetrically on a plate, work out the area of fat and lean to the nearest square inch with the aid of a foot rule, and then divide it into seven portions, one of which I cook and eat each morning of the week. The great disadvantage of this latter method is that sometimes I have a guest towards the end of the week, and it is difficult to eat bacon oneself while the guest has nothing but the heel of a loaf and the last scrapings of the marmalade-pot, so that I usually sacrifice at least one-seventh of my store on the altar of hospitality.

Perhaps the best approach to the bacon problem, however, is the idealistic or poetical approach, which was suggested to me by Sympson, who invariably adopts it. He always purchases one good big fat rasher, capable of standing up to a lot of wear and tear. On the first six mornings of the week he lets it sizzle in the pan over a low gas, and stands with his nose over it inhaling the delightful fragrance and munching a piece of bread, but not actually making inroads into the bacon at all. He says that by closing his eyes and sniffing hard he is able to feel that he is actually having bacon for breakfast every morning, although in truth he never eats it until Sunday. One beauty of the scheme is that even if he has quite a lot of guests he is able without personal loss to invite them hospitably to sniff with him to their hearts' content; though naturally he expects them to bring their own bread.





"Traffic speed-up, eh? Well, we don't 'ave they Oxford Street goin's-on down 'ere."

Tom in the Harness Room

BRISK in inertia fifty years
the ship
sails under glass
full-rigged through vacuum.

Brown velvet,
velvet-murmuring bees pass
the open window.

More drowsy than their hum
full summer sighs at ease in the sweet
grass
where the cornerake beats his drum.

And in the harness room, beside the
ship—
his mind as far away
from the sun, beating down on the
roof like brass
as the mimic stuns'ls set for—
where? Cathay?—
Old Tom, who, when Young Tom,
rigged fore-and-aft
that cherished ship

plies with as cunning a craft
in's fingers his love-labour
polishing
throat-lash, and brow-band,
curb-rein and snaffle-rein
till metal and leather are gleaming,
glittering
from neat's-foot oil,
sweet oil,
and—hush, I beg,
in Whitehall breathe it not!—
a compound of his own, with yolk of
egg
and . . .
never mind!

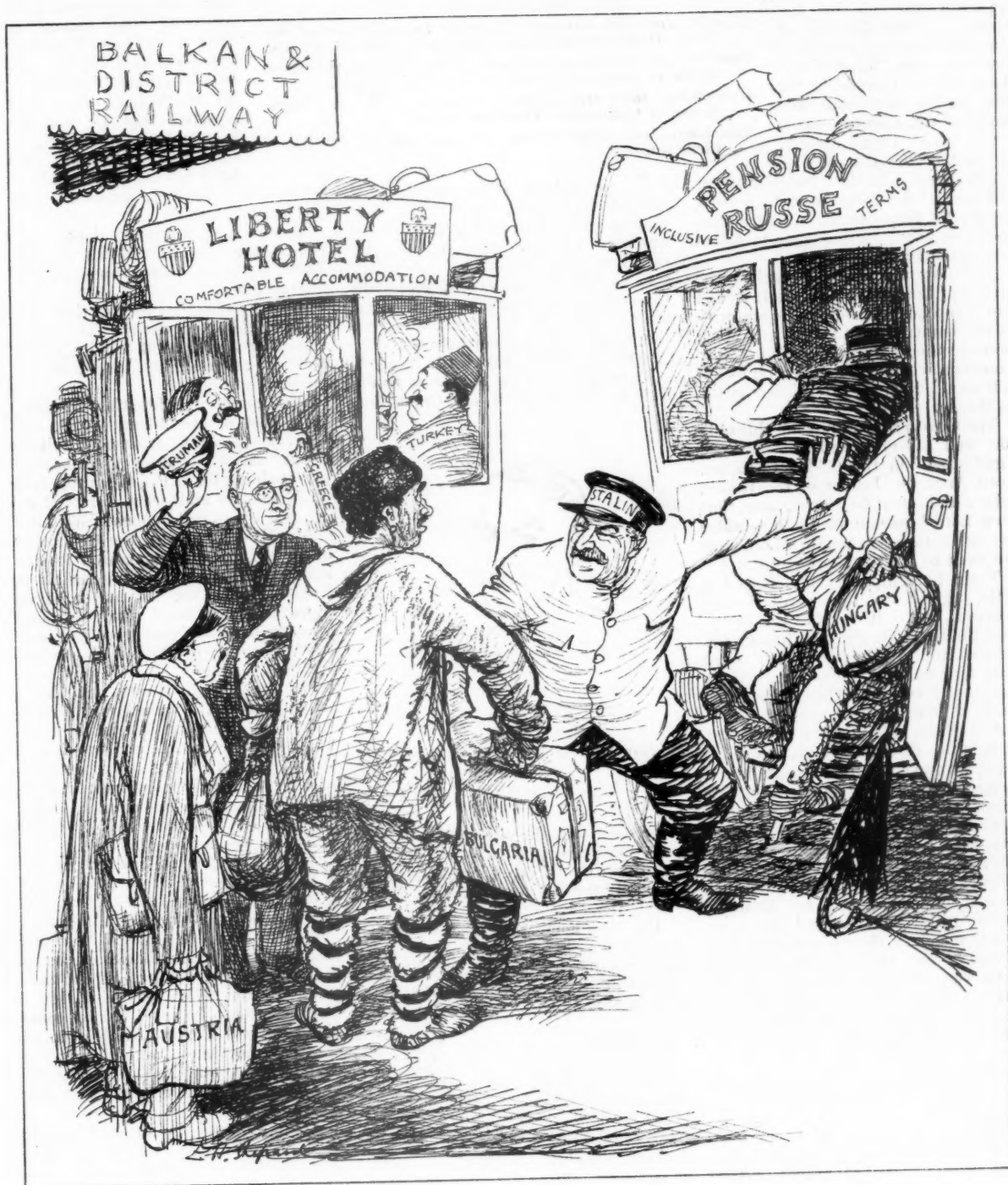
Each on its harness peg
hangs saddle and bridle,
bit, and rowelled spur—
no kit laid out for a general's frigid gaze
orderlier.

Before him,
on the drop table (never dropped)

are ranged Tom's brushes, polishes
and rags;
the austere room is stifling as a
tent
in the noon desert
and the clock-hand drags
over the stables, slow as a gnomon's
finger.

Heat seems to linger
breathless itself, and panting
in this close room.

But Tom, the groom
who once was a sailor
and is a chauffeur now
(in theory, anyhow)
keeping brown leather, black leather
supple and sweet,
heeds not the weather,
for his mind's a-trot
down lanes a-crackle with cat-ice to
the meet.
R. C. S.



THE RIVAL BUSES

MONDAY, June 9th.—When the Transport Bill was in the Commons it was got through by the stern and relentless use of the Parliamentary expedient known as the "Guillotine." This sets a time-table for the passing of various sections of the measure—and, when the time arrives, through it goes, discussed or undiscussed. In fact the Transport Bill passed the Commons with a strict regard for time-keeping which augurs well (we hope) for the time-tables of the nationalized railways.

But now the Bill has reached the House of Lords. And in the House of Lords the Government has no majority at its command. In fact at any given moment the mob (composed of stately Conservative and Liberal Peers) could, if it would, rush the *executioners* to the guillotine.

The Government, knowing this only too well, never mentions the word "guillotine" in the Gilded Chamber. Lord ADDISON, Leader of the House, asks, with his best bedside manner, that their Lordships may please to consider sitting a little later than their Lordships are wont to do. Say—er—11 P.M.?

Their Lordships, having gasped a little, agreed to this revolutionary proposal, and so it was that the Transport Bill began its journey through the Upper House. On the paper were some four hundred amendments, three hundred from the Opposition, one hundred from the Government.

And there was Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH. He arrived with an armful of papers and a headful of bright ideas. Being (among many other things) a railway director, he was able to speak with authority on transport. Being a witty and pungent speaker, he was able to speak with more than authority. He was against the Bill, which he thought unnecessary, if not actually harmful; and he expressed the hope (it was not *quite* clear whether he was serious or not) that the Board which is to run Britain's railways would christen itself the "National United Transport Scheme." He explained, a trifle diffidently, that the initials would look awfully well on the side of a railway engine—and that they would also express his view of the Government's plans.

Noble Lords who are not movie-fans (or who perhaps did not recognize the word without the invariable prefix "Aw—") seemed a little puzzled, but the joke went down very well, on the whole, even if it was but tardily seen.

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Monday, June 9th.—House of Lords: Transport under Review. House of Commons: All About Agriculture, etc.

Tuesday, June 10th.—House of Lords: Transport Again. House of Commons: Root of All Evil Debated.

Wednesday, June 11th.—House of Lords: Foreign Affairs. House of Commons: The Root Again.

Thursday, June 12th.—House of Commons: A Matter of Conscience.

It epitomized the general view taken in the House. In fact the view was so general that Lord ADDISON was moved to protest against what he called a "demonstration." Anyway, said he, playing the ace no post-1945 Government spokesman ever neglects, the Government had a mandate from the people. He did not actually add: "So there!" but it was clearly implied.

Then (just to show there was no ill-feeling) he accepted an Opposition

harsh term, Lord S. amended it to "veiled menaces." Twice more, before the sitting ended, the Government suffered reverse. Lord ADDISON was moved to utter a "warning" to their Conservative Lordships not to do anything "dangerous." To which Lord SALISBURY retorted that he and his friends were not going to submit to "blackmail." On Lord A.'s complaining of this

However, having made deprecating noises, the Government let it pass. There's always to-morrow—and the "other place."

As for their Lordships, they just went on talking about the Bill. Uncle Remus or Brer Rabbit could not have done it more calmly. And it was another late night.

The Commons, before they got down to details of the Finance Bill, had a very pleasant afternoon talking about alleged "Budget leakages," private buses for M.P.s, the autographs of Ministers, and what some M.P.s are still apt to call "cognate matters."

Mr. HUGH DALTON, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced (to the relief of all, for the rare scandals in British public life are never taken flippantly) that there was no ground at all for suspicion that there had been any improper revelation of Budget secrets, leading to the profitable buying of shares. He did not, therefore, propose to take any further action or order an official inquiry. This drew general applause, and Commander GURNEY BRAITHWAITE, who had originally mentioned what he looked on as suspicious circumstances, handsomely acknowledged that all suspicion was now set at rest.

About the private bus service for M.P.s who suffer from late night sittings, Mr. WILL GLENVIL HALL, for the Treasury, announced that honourable Members had missed the bus (literally, this time), the reason being that the service, having cost the taxpayer a cool £750, was now "off." This seemed to be regretted by some Members, but Mr. Hall firmly pointed out that the tickets were costing the taxpayer too much, as an average of only three Members a month used the buses.

Nobody moved the formal adoption of a proposal made by Mr. LIPSON, that the difficulty would best be met by *abolishing late sittings*.

The talk about Ministerial autographs arose from an indignant complaint by Mr. TOM DRIBERG that Ministers were actually sending letters



Impressions of Parliamentarians

7. LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH

suggestion that the size of the Transport Commission should be slightly increased. Everybody seemed gratified.

The House sat until eleven o'clock—almost.

The Commons were discussing the Agriculture Bill on Third Reading, and there was much learned talk on things agricultural. Everybody seemed to have a good time.

TUESDAY, June 10th.—Alas! the Entente Cordiale in the Lords was revoked, cancelled and repealed this afternoon. Scarcely had their Lordships foregathered when there was a defeat of the Government. Everybody looked suitably shocked at such brusqueness—but the figures were eighty-seven for the Opposition, twenty-one for the Government, so they could not be the subject of argument.



"The Queen of Sheba? Well, I hope she's remembered to bring her emergency card."

to Members of Parliament (there was a shudder of horror) signed by their private secretaries! Mr. GLENVIL HALL said he was sorry about this, and pointed out that Ministers had quite a lot to do these days. Mr. ANTHONY EDEN sternly pointed out that it was a long-standing tradition that M.P.s had a right to have letters signed by Ministers, and Mr. HALL, looking chastened, answered that he hoped further offence would be avoided. Everybody looked satisfied except Ministers.

The cognate matters included a demand from Mrs. CASTLE that there should be no cuts in foodstuffs when dollars have to be saved. This promise Mr. DALTON declined to give and, on Mrs. CASTLE's protesting, he told her to set a good example by giving up smoking. A subsequent private (well, fairly private) discussion between the two held up public business somewhat.

But in the end the committee stage of the Finance Bill was reached, and went on, as orgies and shirt-making always did in old-fashioned novels and poems, far into the night.

WEDNESDAY, June 11th.—There was a strange air of expectancy, coupled with disillusionment, about the Government side of the House of

Commons to-day. Before the House assembled there had been a meeting of the Government's supporters, and they had been told that, while the principle of equal pay for men and women was accepted, the practice could not, in the present state of the country's finances, be enforced.

So when the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to make a public statement on the subject, most of the House wore the expression of those who are seeing a film twice over. The public statement was the same as the private one—and, by all accounts, so were the querulous queries that hurtled over from the back-benches. The Conservatives, perhaps feeling some delicacy in intervening in a domestic row, left it more or less to the Labour M.P.s—who, in turn, made a point of leaving it almost completely to the women Members.

But Mr. DALTON would give nothing away. He said the idea was a fine one—but too expensive. If anyone could think of a compromise, all right. But if not . . .

Then the House went on to discuss, for hours and hours, the Finance Bill, rising at 5.30 A.M., after some fifteen hours' debate.

In the Lords, Lord TEMPLEWOOD opened a debate on foreign affairs in

his usual well-informed and temperate manner. He said he had found a feeling in other countries that war with Russia was inevitable—but he did not agree with that. Nor did he agree about the inevitability of an economic crash some time soon.

Lord PAKENHAM, who had just come back from Germany, wound up the debate with a swift review of the state of the world. A useful discussion.

THURSDAY, June 12th.—An important statement on behalf of the Foreign Office about the British Government's attitude towards Soviet influence in Hungary put the House of Commons in grave mood. More will be heard of this.

The House was first amused, then rather ashamed, when Lord WINTER-TON (probably in his capacity as Father of the House) mentioned that a great many books and periodicals had "disappeared" from the Library. This stark revelation that our rulers are human like the rest of us startled the Galleries as much as it did the Floor. And Mr. Speaker said he was sorry, but if the books continued to "disappear" he would have to do something about it.

Then the matter was left to individual consciences.



"I don't so much object to 'Guests are requested to make their own beds,' but . . ."

Picnics

(By One Who Doesn't.)

NOW let the Bard deride
The curious craze of woman
For eating meals outside—
A habit hardly human,
Which he esteems a pest
And answers good and quick "Nix!"
Should any ass suggest
His going out on picnics.

No male would thus devise
A practice that belittles,
Degrades and stultifies
That solemn subject—vittles;
Nay, 'tis the female tribe
That loves to scratch and serum
for 't
In what I must describe
As damnable discomfort.

And yet when not o'erthrown
By this peculiar passion
Woman's a creature prone
To living Bristol-fashion;
Why does she then delight,
From Tomintoul to Tresco,
In taking sup-and-bite
(Mostly messily) alfresco?

Some old primeval scourge
Methinks upsets her reason,
Some nymph - and - woodland
urge
Recurring at this season;
Some vague vestigial Pan
Whom still her fancy pampers
Hounds her to billy-can
And paper plates and hampers.

I need not here descant
Upon your picnic's features—
The wasp, the midge, the ant
And other charming creatures;
And when with these are yoked
Nettles and thorns and brambles
And sanded food—or smoked,
What is your meal? A shambles.

Yet sure as cuckoo's call
Betokens May's accession,
Woman is held in thrall
By this insane obsession;
And man—alas and woe!—
Must follow, longing not to;
A-picknicking he'll go,
Poor nincompoop. He's got to.
H. B.

Brass Tacks on the Air

THIS was a discussion broadcast in the Unobtainable Programme, and if you want to know how I came to be chairman I can only say that it's an absolute mystery to me. Well, after the announcer had introduced the speakers—there was Tivvley, old "Pozzy" Tivvley, the well-known authority on one thing and another, and the estimable Minno (Labyrinth) Torr, and the two memory experts, Ivor Gett and Llandudno Butt Forgott—after they had all been introduced in words that took a good deal of choosing, I thought I might as well start things off by calling on Torr; though I didn't expect him to concentrate on such a small corner of the problem.

"Now it's time we got right down to brass tacks in these discussions," he said plaintively. "As you know, in my organization in the North of England we employ a large number of sword-swallowers, and I think you will all agree with me when I say that the worst thing for a sword-swallower is when he can't get his bicarbonate of soda. Now I want something to be done about that. It's all very well for the Fat Lady interests to complain about the rations, or the roundabout managers to say the modern circle isn't so round as the ones to be had for the asking in nineteen-thirty-nine, but what are the facts? As we look round we see on every side, sword-swallowers, who daren't risk swallowing a blade of any kind, because of the shortage of bicarbonate of soda. Now I don't want to give the impression that I'm in any way dissatisfied with anything at all, but it does seem to me that there must be something wrong with a system that allows that state of affairs to continue."

"Yes, well," I said, "there we have the point of view of a man who knows sword-swallowers inside—I mean inside out. What do you say to that, Tivvley? Can you offer any hope that more soda will soon be rolling off the production lines in the bicarbonating plants?"

At this Tivvley said plaintively, "It's all very well, but you've got to remember that the problem isn't nearly as simple as Torr makes out. I've had thirty-five years' experience of this industry, and again and again, not just once, but again and again I've seen sword-swallowers literally surrounded by piles of bicarbonate of soda, and still not making the slightest effort to swallow more swords than were absolutely necessary to keep body and soul together. Now you've got to admit that it isn't a sign of a healthy industry when you get man after man refusing, it may be because of a speck of rust or for some other reason, to swallow more than his bare minimum of swords."

"Ah, but yes, well, we admit that," said Torr, and then went on plaintively, "but if I may say so, I think Tivvley put his finger on it when he mentioned rust. Rust is the great curse of the sword-swallower in this country to-day."

"Yes, but look here, Torr," I said plaintively, "we're rather getting off the point, aren't we? If I understand your main contention, it is that the sword-swallower's real trouble is the shortage of bicarbonate of soda. Is it rust as well?"

"I definitely do say it's rust as well," said Torr, plaintively. "Tivvley may have had thirty-five years in his industry, but I've had thirty-four in mine, so I'm no chicken..."

At this point we all laughed (plaintively).

"... and I definitely do say that in the sword-swallowing world, rust is as big a problem as bicarbonate of soda," said Torr.

"Well, yes, but after all, Torr," I said plaintively, "we've got to concentrate on one point or the other. We

all know that the great problem to-day is to get more sword-swallowers back on the job, but which aspect of it are we to concentrate on—rust or bicarbonate of soda? Now, Gett, what do you suggest?"

"Well," Gett said plaintively, "I've said before and I say again, that the only way to get more soda bicarbonated is to go all out for happy working conditions, and one way to do that is to rectify this disastrous shortage of round corners for cinema screens. All over the country to-day, you find communities of soda bicarbonate workers who are discontented and dissatisfied because in their off-duty time they have to sit in cinemas where the corners of the screen are not properly rounded."

"Yes, Gett, but you must remember," I said plaintively, "that according to Tivvley we're concentrating on the wrong point. Tivvley says that even when there isn't any shortage of bicarbonate of soda things are just as bad, don't you Tivvley?"

Tivvley said plaintively, "I certainly do. Why only this morning a man with as much sword-swallowing experience as myself was saying that his sword-swallowers could hardly move for bicarbonate of soda and yet the number that were pulling their weight could be counted on the fingers of one clock."

"Ah, well," I said plaintively, "now we're getting down to it, and I think we'd better hear from a man who has written a book on How to Avoid Incorrect Sword-Swallowing."

Then I called on the rather long-winded Llandudno Butt Forgott, who of course held forth plaintively for nearly all the rest of our time. He hardly left me a minute in which to sum up before the next programme, a documentary feature about Bird-Watching called "Sifting the Wheatear from the Chough."

R. M.

Faster Cricket

"It needed only an hour and a half to give the South Africans their fifth victory here this morning..."—"Daily Telegraph."



"Now this King Midas—everything he touched turned to tobacco."

At the Play

LIFE WITH FATHER (SAVOY)—ANGEL (STRAND)—ANNIE
GET YOUR GUN (COLISEUM)—OFF THE RECORD (APOLLO)

THE way the Day boys felt about their sire, the special blend of awe, resentment and over-riding affection which his roaring egotism produced in them, is one of the curiosities of social history and has given us a comic book which takes its place easily in the front

He may have appeared a trifle ludicrous, that is if you kept your head as *Mother* did and had nerves of steel, but when he felt like it he had only to look at the young to precipitate guilt and panic. Mr. BANKS is built on trimmer lines and the quality of his explosions

more martial and terrifying figure, an eccentric distortion of the Victorian parent.

has not the atomic spread of *Father's*. In one very important particular he is successful, namely, in bringing out the essential innocence of Mr. Day. (I think it is quite clear that murder could hardly have been avoided on Madison Avenue if everybody concerned hadn't realized that *Father* would have been the sweetest-tempered man who ever lived if he just hadn't happened to be *Father*.) But one gets the impression that this is a likeable suburban parent with a distressing kink in his liver which a doctor should be able to straighten out, whereas we all know that no doctor on earth

second falls away badly. The period remains mid-Victorian. *Valentine*, a sixteen-year-old who hates her father for having forced parenthood on her insane mother and bitterly resents the promotion of her governess to step-mother, veers between defiance and misery and is obviously unbalanced. Storms and beatings and more storms follow each other until one morning little *Ellis*, her step-brother, is found in the outhouse with his throat cut. *Valentine* is heartbroken, but the police, seizing with creditable swiftness the significance of a missing night-gown, arrest her. Cleverly defended, she is acquitted by the magistrates and is conveniently exported to a French convent, where five years later she admits to the murder, returns for trial and is imprisoned.

The play is dramatic until her acquittal, and from then the interest ebbs out of it. On the evidence of her confession the second trial can have but one ending, and to the questions "Was she mad?" and "Did she really do it?" there seems no answer save "Yes." Moreover, the mechanics are clumsy. I cannot see that anything is gained by making the story a tale told in dotage by the counsel for the defence, and the device on which Miss HAYLEY BELL falls back in the second act of filling in the action with commentary from a loud-speaker, not entirely intelligible, is a positive invitation to coughers and rustlers. After so promising a start all this is a great pity; the more so since Miss JOYCE REDMAN's *Valentine* is a grand piece of acting, sensitive and vivid, and Mr. ALAN WEBB's charming barrister, Miss JANE HENDERSON's sombre step-mother and Mr. MARK DIGNAM's harsh and haunted father are strong in support. Mr. JOHN MILLS produced.



[Life With Father

TRYING THE DOG ON FATHER.

Clarence	MR. ROWLAND BARTROP
Father	MR. LESLIE BANKS
Mother	MISS SOPHIE STEWART

line. If anything compounded of so many delicate family nuances were ever to be satisfactorily transferred to the stage a miracle, I feel, would be needed. *Life With Father*, dramatized by Mr. HOWARD LINDSAY and Mr. RUSSEL CROUSE, has run for eight years in New York and has presumably carried off the world's records. I don't think it will beat any at the Savoy. New Yorkers know their Clarence Day by heart and I take it that for such a run to be possible *Father* himself must have been more accurately cast in America. The fact that Mr. LESLIE BANKS is one of our most accomplished and delightful actors is neither here nor there. He is not *Father*, and a ginger wig and a lot of skilful tacking between gentleness and irritability are not enough to transform him. *Father* was a much

could have made any difference to *Father*.

To me as a fan of CLARENCE DAY this seems no more than a pale reflection of his book, as a reporter of the theatre only a moderately amusing comedy. Miss SOPHIE STEWART gets pretty close to *Mother*, the four boys, each in the red thatch distinguishing the whole family, stir up trouble for themselves convincingly, and a pageant of paralysed housemaids troops across the scene. Yet it is thin stuff, and the padding shows. Mr. MURRAY MACDONALD produced.

Miss MARY HAYLEY BELL's new play, *Angel*, at the Strand, is based on the Constance Kent case that shook the 'sixties. Of its two acts, the first is powerful, though a little slow, the

I am sorry to write what appears to be a minority report about *Annie Get Your Gun*, our latest and much publicized arrival from the dollar zone, but I found it very disappointing. For an American musical it has surprisingly soggy patches; and one becomes very grateful to the gay and athletic chorus which, dressed superbly, breaks things up with eccentric dances and smartly delivered song. They get high marks. I must say that the minority report I was minded at the interval to write was afterwards much tempered by a notable increase in pace and fun, but the show was still short of humour. I came to the conclusion that Miss DOLORES GRAY and Mr. BILL JOHNSON, both of whom have magnificent voices but little comic talent, have been mishandled in the first half by

the producer, Miss HELEN TAMIRIS. Miss GRAY in particular is put to great disadvantage by being obliged to walk like a rheumatic platypus, this as a reminder of the hick origins of *Annie*, and to assume the expression of a young heifer whenever her boy-friend comes in view. Later I got to like them both much better. The scene is circusland, the theme the rivalry between a male and female sharpshooter, two hearts beating as one but separated by a level deadliness of eye. Mr. IRVING BERLIN's lyrics and music range unevenly from the frankly pedestrian to the effectively romantic and the fairly amusing, Miss WENDY TOYE and Mr. IRVING DAVIES dance cleverly, and Miss BARBARA BABINGTON and Mr. HAL BRYAN cause mild diversion; but apart from those two splendid voices the evening, such as it is, belongs to the chorus.

It is a pleasure to see a comedy as well acted and as lightly taken as *Off the Record*, at the Apollo, which may not be the kind of thing to tie an audience in knots but which is consistent in its fooling and delightfully natural in its development. Mr. IAN HAY and Commander STEPHEN KING-HALL know this line of business inside out, and in Mr. WILLIAM MOLLISON they have a producer with a nice sense of the timing of inanity. You may think it improbable that an Admiral should be taken in by one of his own officers posing as the First Lord's P.P.S., but was there not a famous occasion on which the Navy hospitably entertained a gang of bogus dignitaries? While the officer intrudes upon the Admiral, against whom he bears a hereditary grudge, the real P.P.S., a friend of his, is trying his hand with very small success at commanding his destroyer. Out of this exchange, complicated by the impact of the Admiral's daughter and of a knowledgeable ex-Wren, springs some telling nonsense, the best scenes being those in which the Admiral, a noted trimmer, is persuaded to commit himself to totally conflicting views on the future of the battleship. On the distaff side Miss EVE ASHLEY and Miss PAMELA MATTHEWS intervene charmingly. Mr. HUGH WAKEFIELD is to the life the type of senior officer with a growl and a thirst, Mr. HUBERT GREGG (P.P.S.) and Mr. BILL GATES make dashing culprits, Mr. ROGER MAXWELL rings the bell as an aged back-bencher so far to the Right as to be barely in view, and Mr. TOM GILL gives a very funny sketch of a Flag-Lieutenant with a closed mind and an open mouth.

ERIC.

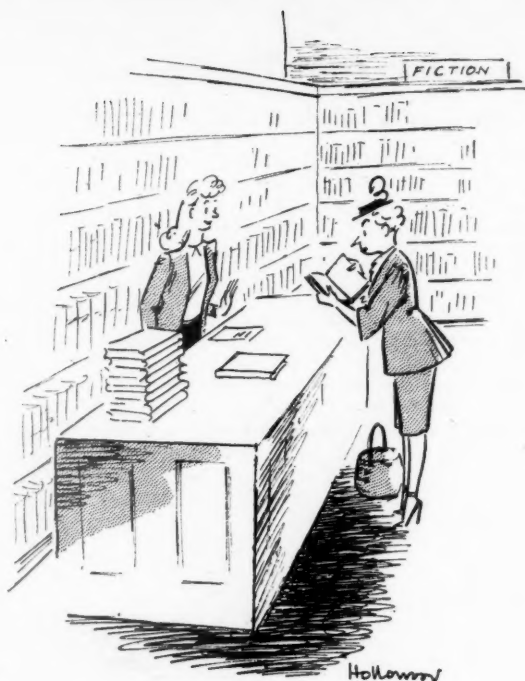
To a Packet of Twenty

(To the onlie Begetter of the Insuing Sonnet, Mr. H. D., All Happinesse)

FAREWELL, thou art too dear for my possessing,
Nor will I buy thee at so vain expense;
Thy vile increase, my slender hope decreasing,
Sets thee and me at hatefull difference.
For how shall I, without access of plenty,
At thy fond value waste my lowly store,
Or give in fee for thine encarded twenty
Out of my hungry purse a farthing more?
Thyself thou gav'st, in smoke my substance burning,
And I, thy prodigal, too idly willing,
Who, bankrupt now, thy sweet persuasion spurning,
Forswear thy love to save mine extra shilling:
Thus shall I lose thee, though in wealth a winner,
Perforce a saint, yet still in heart a sinner.



"She's done over thirty thousand miles, most of it looking for somewhere to park."



"Try starting at chapter four where Gregory Peck shows up."

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

"Don or Devil?"

To cling to a myth when you can have documented history is pardonable only in the very young; yet it is to be feared that many of us still confront *The Rise of the Spanish American Empire* (HOLLIS AND CARTER, 21/-) in the spirit of "Westward Ho!" A worthier approach to three hundred years of colonial enterprise—enterprise whose cultural effects may prove as lasting as our own—is offered us on very attractive terms by what is undoubtedly Señor SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA's finest book. Politically the Spanish kingdoms in South America are dead. Their "Fall" will follow in a second volume and its causes seep ominously into this one. But their ideal, the aim of the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church, for their Indian "orphans" was neither slavery nor exploitation; and when all the crimes and blunders have been squarely faced, the achievement remains unique and the iniquity common to the age. Slaves were not imported by the Spaniards; and Spain and her Indians collaborated over such masterpieces of civilization as the cities of Mexico and Lima. Even so Father Francisco de Vitoria, the greatest Spanish jurist of the sixteenth century, maintained that the Indians had a right to their territory and laws and that Spaniards should only visit them as apostles and honest traders.

H. P. E.

Cochrane

Cochrane never directed a general engagement, and his fame is therefore much less than Nelson's or Blake's or Hawke's, but as a leader of desperate enterprises in which

great results were achieved with relatively small means he has no superior in history. As Mr. CHRISTOPHER LLOYD shows in his most admirably-written study (*Lord Cochrane: Seaman, Radical, Liberator*. LONGMANS, GREEN, 15/-), Cochrane was out of his element on dry land—cross-grained, cantankerous and self-assertive. While in command of a small brig, the *Speedy*, he captured fifty vessels, one hundred and twenty-two guns and more than five hundred prisoners, but not being satisfied with the Admiralty's recognition of his achievement, he fell out with the First Lord, and thus at the beginning of his career spoilt his chances of rising to the top. Some years later, after one of his most audacious enterprises, he forced a court-martial on his commanding officer, and thus confirmed the uneasy feelings with which the authorities regarded him. A spell as a radical agitator in Parliament was another black mark, and a Stock Exchange fraud with which he was (wrongly, it seems) associated sent him abroad, to South America, where he performed a series of feats comparable with Pizarro's, culminating in the capture of the frigate *Esmeralda*, which Mr. LLOYD calls the most brilliant cutting-out expedition in history. The last years of his long life were spent in perfecting various military inventions, among them a secret weapon which our government during the Crimean War considered practicable but too inhumane.

H. K.

Afoot in Ayrshire

Autumn in Kyle (JENKINS, 12/6) should serve to light not only the topographical, historical and legendary path of the West Lowlands pedestrian, but that of the arm-chair Rambler. It also provides a background for Burns: especially if your taste for fine poetry inclines you to a glamorous view of a rather unprepossessing life. The raciness of Mr. D. C. CUTHBERTSON's narrative furthers the sharing of his own keen interest in a "couthy and homely" patch of Scotland; and the district does, as he avers, provide more thrilling traditions to the square mile than the shaggiest agglomerations of Highland glens. Heresy, witchcraft, smuggling, family vendettas—and the usual persecutions, hangings and counterplots that overtake such activities—abound. The eighteenth century predominates: not only because it stands for Burns, or even because its mixture of sophistication and brutality is the most grisly, but because it was the peak hour of townlets and villages—Mauchline, Catrine, Tarbolton, Kilmarnock, Kilmaurs and the rest—that enshrine for the writer the spirit of Scotland. Scientists, who are otherwise hardly catered for here, should be intrigued by the blackened calloused hands of the new-born babies of Kilmaurs—babies whose forbears were makers of horn spoons. Southron ignorance, reaching for an atlas, will regret that the author's charming photographs are unaccompanied by a map.

H. P. E.

The Age of Philip II.

Fictional biography seems to be in as great demand as ever, and there must therefore still be a large number of readers who are under the illusion that an historical character is being recreated for them when he is shown running his fingers musingly through his beard, or shuffling in felt slippers towards his *escritoire*, or gazing with unseeing eyes at the falling autumn leaves. There is hardly a page in *The Dream of Philip II* (JOHN WESTHOUSE, 12/6) unadorned by some picturesque platitude of this kind. It is possible and even probable that more than once in his life William of Orange "turned uneasily in bed and stared

at the wall . . ." It may also be that on the first night spent by Cervantes in Seville jail "the oil lamp flared for a moment and went out. He sat in darkness." An Atlantic storm in the sixteenth century doubtless resembled an Atlantic storm to-day in all essential particulars; then as now the waves must have "thundered forward like powerful steeds." But the only effect of these touches, and of the countless similar ones with which Mr. EDGAR MAAS has bespangled his pages, is to blur his painstaking and comprehensive reconstruction of the age of Philip II. The author's sympathies are with Philip II, the dour, infinitely patient champion of the Catholic counter-revolution. "Spain," Mr. MAAS writes, "is faith. It is inner certitude, confidence in man's fate, his dignity, and his mission." An austere theme, which would have gained by a correspondingly austere treatment.

H. K.

Sahara Life

It is not often that a chance meeting—a mere matter of three minutes of conversation in fact—can alter the whole course of a man's life, but that was what happened to R. V. C. BODLEY in *Wind in the Sahara* (ROBERT HALE, 12/6) when, after the First World War, he met T. E. Lawrence for a brief moment at the Peace Conference. The author was then a young officer: disillusioned, prematurely embittered by war, tired to death at the thought of returning to the post-war muddle; so when Lawrence advised him to live with the Arabs he took his advice and went off to the Sahara. The author's more blimpish friends were astonished; the French, when he arrived in North Africa and announced his plans, first thought him a "spy" and then "mentally deranged," but the Arabs, who were at first suspicious, understood and made him one of themselves. R. V. C. BODLEY wanted to get rid of his "false self" and find peace of mind: to do so he became a nomad. He bought sheep; renounced his European habits (most difficult of all—breakfast and lunch); clothed himself, like Lawrence, in Arab clothes; lived in a tent; embraced the Arab religion; turned his back on the modern world, and for seven years wandered with his Arab companions over the ocean-like desert. The author deals lightly with what must have been appalling difficulties. Though his style is undistinguished he gives the facts without glamorizing Arab life (as Hollywood has done so ridiculously), and what he has to tell is, in itself, of such great interest that the reader will be absorbed. On certain aspects of desert life the author is somewhat reticent, but that is perhaps as well and it does not detract from the conscientious and fair picture he has given in general.

R. K.

Two Stories from Wales

Mr. CLEDWYN HUGHES is a young Welsh writer who leans to the macabre. An acute observer of detail and a vivid reporter of incident, he tells his stories without much subtlety and certainly without much attempt at a balanced style, but his blunt clipped paragraphs have a direct and rugged strength of their own. *The Different Drummer* (PILOT PRESS, 9/6) begins in a knacker's yard, the more intestinal aspects of which we are not spared, and goes on to describe the adventures of a conscientious objector put on to civil defence in a badly bombed city while his wife, left behind in the village, is expensively seduced by the local black marketeer. It is a squalid tale, in the main well made. The interesting thing about it is that Mr. HUGHES so infuses his writing with his native lilt that in reading one finds oneself half singing. Also

included is "The Inn Closes for Christmas." The subject is more ambitious, a man's ruin on account of his wife's artificial leg. Happily married, she is left a cripple by a motor smash and her shiny new limb comes to dominate her life until her husband kills her and is himself driven to suicide, not by remorse but by a growing nightmare in which the leg, now a glinting, tapping monster, hounds him to his death. Mr. HUGHES tells this story more quietly than the other, and though he fails to make good the woman's morbid affection for the leg he does succeed in turning the screw ingeniously as the man's terror mounts.

E. O. D. K.

World Apart

"Going to sea is like a temporary death. You leave this world and go to another . . . Going to sea has all the advantages of suicide without any of its inconveniences." So, at the end of his new book, *In the First Watch* (FABER, 12/6), Mr. WILLIAM McFEE sums up a philosophy acquired between his schooling in 1909 as third engineer in a 7,000-ton tramp and his appointment as chief in another ship after years of adventure and change ashore and afloat. In his preface he reiterates the need for a seaman of that complete severance from land which these present days of wireless do not permit. He is, as was Conrad, writer and sailor too, and learned his double trade by choice under hard conditions. His people were ship-owners, yet he took a fourth engineer's job on a chief's ticket for the sake of experience. His story is of toil and pleasuring, the ways of engines and the ways of any number of port-side girls, of picture-seeing in Venice, book-writing on board and fights with leaks. He is at his best when describing his ship-mates, who were, on the whole, a good deal less crude than the lady companions. The best of all his characters is Mr. Mair, a chief engineer who suffered from insomnia and yet was as good as most Scots at his own particular job—"You were to believe that a Scotch engineer, given a corkscrew, a monkey wrench and a piece of string, could drive a steamer around the world and do his own repairs." It is a good book, packed with humour and anecdotes and impressions of men.

B. E. B.



"Pardon me, madam. Do you object to the Bankside Power Station scheme?"



"Go on about the jungle, dear."

The Cosmic Mess

"Lolloping Along"

LET us have a little quiet fun with the racing experts. By now you have forgotten about the Derby Stakes, and they, without a word of apology, are talking the same confident nonsense about other horse-races. But this column never forgets.

This column never did believe that *Tudor Minstrel* ("Horse of the Century"?) would win the Derby. And it is not being clever after the event. For several days it went about the capital saying "I want to bet that *Tudor Minstrel* will not win the Derby". Five days before the race it found a nice man who agreed to do business. But this column was nicer still. It gave (? laid) him odds of 2 to 1. That is to say, it risked four pounds to win two. This column then sat back and quietly enjoyed itself with the columns of the racing experts.

This sort of thing:

"Most judges regard *Tudor Minstrel*'s task as a virtual walk-over . . ."

"*Tudor Minstrel* first, and the rest nowhere . . ."

"I expect . . . that he will prove himself

to-day to be one of the most brilliant Derby winners of all time . . ."

" . . . will win by a furlong."

"I thought . . . that *Tudor Minstrel* was as near a 'racing certainty' as I had seen in many years' experience . . ."

" . . . *Tudor Minstrel* is the unanimous choice of leading racing experts of seven national newspapers this morning."

Most of all this column chuckled over this one:

"He will hold his own up the hill and then make his beautiful action and sheer class tell. He will be in the lead in the straight and will be just lolloping along in front of *Sayajirao* and, perhaps, *Merry Quip* and *Migoli*."

"Just lolloping along." Well, well.

Now, why was this column so confident and chuckly? Not merely because it is manifestly the malign design of Fate that poor Mr. Richards (like poor Lord Astor) shall never win a Derby. Not merely because in one hundred and sixty-seven Derby races the favourite has won only fifty-two times (and this column has no use for favourites,

anyhow). No. In this column's expert view there was no evidence that *Tudor Minstrel* was likely to win the Derby. He was unbeaten. He had won four races easily. But they were shorter races. And, as the experts kept telling us, he had never run a mile and a half.

Even the experts, to do them justice, were not quite sure that he could stay a mile and a half (though they only let on in cautious parentheses).

"I believe that he will win to-day, though the distance may be the absolute limit of his stamina." (The Times.)

" . . . if *Tudor Minstrel* does lack stamina, as is possible with the *Americus Girl* blood on his dam's side . . ." (Daily Telegraph.)

" . . . he is bred, of course, more for dazzle than stamina . . ." (Daily Express.)

" . . . one that may find a flaw in his stamina is *Sayajirao*." (Daily Express.)

"Horses of such great speed are rarely true stayers, but even if *Tudor Minstrel* is not an exception to the rule I am confident his great brilliance will

outclass the others, unless the weather deteriorates and the going becomes soft." (Daily Mail.)

And, by the way, they were not alone in their doubts. For, this column now reads (in two or three papers):

"After the race the *Minstrel's* trainer, Fred Darling, confided to me a secret fear he had had about the colt's ability to stay the distance."

One or two mysteries now call for discussion.

First, if there was so much uncertainty about "the colt's capacity to stay", why was there so much certainty about his winning? One can understand that the common punter, eager for "Gordon" to win, liking a good name, and reading roughly that he was unbeaten and runs very fast, might go mad about the "Minstrel". But how comes it that all these hard-headed experts, though confessing their uncertainty about the one point that really matters, support the myth—and assist the common punter to lose (according to the papers) between £5,000,000 and £10,000,000?

Secondly, why was there all this uncertainty? A race-horse has less privacy than a film-star. The apparatus available for the discovery of all his qualities is enormous and merciless. What an extraordinary thing that when the "horse of the century" starts on his only Derby run nobody knows whether he can keep on running fast for a mile and a half or not!

"Well, but," the experts will mutter petulantly, "you see, he never ran a mile and a half, publicly, before."

That brings us to Mystery Three. Why not? Again, this column is not merely yapping after the event; for, two days before the event, it risked cosmic odium by addressing to the *Daily Telegraph* the following letter, which was published on the morning of the race:

"SIR,—I keep reading that the Derby favourite 'has never run a mile and a half'.

"Will someone tell this simple person why the experiment has not been made? It sounds like saying that the third act of a new play has never been rehearsed."

Well, the experts may retort (they haven't yet) that the expression should have been "run in public"; and that plays are not often rehearsed in public. They may also give us some learned stuff about "training". If *Tudor Minstrel* had run in the Lingfield Derby Trial (1½ miles), they may say, he would have been over-trained by the date of the Derby. Well, *Sayajirao* (the Jockey Club, by the way, should forbid names like that) ran in the

Derby Trial, so that all the world knew what he could do; and he did pretty well in the Derby. (One expert, by the way, says that British horses are "spoiled" and "pampered" and do not get enough work.) About these matters this column knows nothing. It just feels that if it had had a secret doubt, like Mr. Darling, it would have made some attempt to find out.

But Mr. Darling, you'll say, who presumably knows more about his business than this column does, *did* try to find out, but in private. True, we read that there was a trial at Beck-hampton on the Tuesday. One paper said that those who knew what happened then dismissed all doubts of staying-power with "a grin and a wink". Mr. Darling, however, it seems, still had his secret fear. What did happen that Tuesday morning, this column wonders? Did *Tudor Minstrel* gallop for a mile and a half that day? How fast did he go? What was his time? Did he falter in the last few furlongs? And why did nobody know? It must be very difficult for a horse to gallop for a mile and a half in absolute secrecy. Was he disguised? Was it done in the dark? Surely in the old days there would have been cunning men lying in the bushes with telescopes and stop-watches. Surely a really enterprising newspaper would have hired a helicopter and seen the whole thing.

What a "scoop"! And what a public service! Owners and trainers, we know, are not interested in betting. They live for their art; and the common punter's troubles do not concern them. We cannot blame Mr. Darling, we suppose, for not announcing his "secret fear". But suppose that some expert had twigged the

truth from a convenient gorse-bush that Tuesday morning, and put it about that "*Tudor Minstrel* does not stay". How many millions of pounds might have gone elsewhere—or even stayed at home! How many book-makers would have missed a week of sleepless nights and a head of white hair! What an opportunity missed! Perhaps our expert stock, like our blood-stock, are a little pampered now. At all events, for centuries to come the common punter will know what to say if any expert gets the least bit uppish. The cry will be:

"Yah! Who gave us *Tudor Minstrel*?" A. P. H.

Happy Ending

I CAME down to breakfast in my beautiful new magenta pullover, and James, thrusting aside his fried egg, dipped his face in his hands. He remained mutely at half-mast while I selected a piece of loofah from the packet and dampened it with a few drops of blue milk.

"Are you finding fault with my spring stomacher?"

"It goes without saying it looks simply terrible against your special scheme of pigmentation," he muttered, "but if that were all it would be nothing. I can easily wear dark glasses while you are here."

"Why, then, does this go deeper?" I asked.

"Have you never known a man haunted by a dream-pullover?"

"Never."

James took a wild eyeful of the middle distance, while I took some sugar.

"It began in the bottom form of my public school."

"Knots in the psyche frequently do."

"The fellow who ran it was a great red muscular brute with about five Blues who could scarcely spell his own name. We called him the Bath Chap. All the little toads who made centuries got double marks, and anyone found asleep at longstop or kicking the ball through the wrong goal got the leg of his chair, which unscrewed. I was always black and blue from the first day of term. To say I disliked this man is merely trifling with words."

"I understand," I said, glancing at his knotted face.

"He invariably wore a jumper, which I suppose some great red muscular female must have knitted for him, in a very subtle shade of yellow, a sort of pale daffodil. It so happened my mother had a fixed idea I should



"How that woman stares!"

look well in a yellow jumper, but whenever we went shopping and she suggested it the disgusting image of the Bath Chap rose so vividly that I used to have to lie down, and after I had been sick we would always buy something quickly in a zebra motif and get out of the shop. This feeling persisted so that even when I was grown-up I had to avoid jumperers' windows."

"It must have been a zig-zag life," I said, turning with real pleasure to my egg.

"One day in 1943 I was sent with secret papers to the Hairpin Marketing Board in their hideout at—I can tell you now—Llandergwymst. It meant sitting in the train all day. The man opposite took off his overcoat as we left Paddington and to my horror he had on a pullover in the exact shade I had known so well. For a moment nausea overwhelmed me and I was reaching for five pounds' worth of cord when the appearance of the man arrested me. He was gentle and flabby and pigeon-chested, and was reading Proust through very thick pebble-glasses. A miracle happened. I drank him in all the way to Llandergwymst, and then I knew that all I wanted out of life, all I had been wanting for a long time, was a basin-necked, cable-stitch in pale daffodil."

"A very moderate agenda."

"I came straight back in one of the Board's Mosquitoes and went to the shop I had been chiefly avoiding. It had jumpers in every colour you can think of, except yellow. The man said they had had plenty of yellow jumpers the day before. So did the man at the next shop, and so did all the men at all the shops I have been to during the last four years."

"Incredible," I exclaimed, *malade notwithstanding*.

"I will not weary you with the details of my frenzied search. Well-meaning friends have tried to help. Often a phone message has sent me rushing across England, only to discover a monstrosity in gamboge or saffron. You do see it must be pale daffodil or nothing, don't you?"

"Of course," I murmured.

"Only once have I found what I wanted, in a shop in Hoxton. It had 'CC' in large letters at the back of the neck, which they told me stood for 'Comrade Cripps.' It went round me all right, but it only came halfway down my chest."

"Couldn't you find the right wool and have one knitted?"

"I see you don't know about knitting. The form is that if you start with pink the thing turns out green. Every single coupon I had has gone on what seemed pale daffodil wool."

"James," I said, "this is serious."

"Serious?" he cried, with a laugh full of rust.

"But not insurmountable."

"Don't tell me you've just seen my dream in a little shop in the north-west corner of the Isle of Man. I couldn't bear it."

"It's a cold day, James."

"Freezing."

"We are the same size, except after you've eaten."

"Always have been. I say, you're not going to offer me that frightful—"

"If you want it." And I pulled up my beautiful new magenta pullover to disclose, nestling warmly underneath, my beautiful new jumper in pale daffodil. James went the colour of lead.

"I feel sick."

"Dammit," I cried, "are we back with the Bath Chap, or is this joy?"

"I'm not quite sure," he said.

ERIC.

o o

H'm.

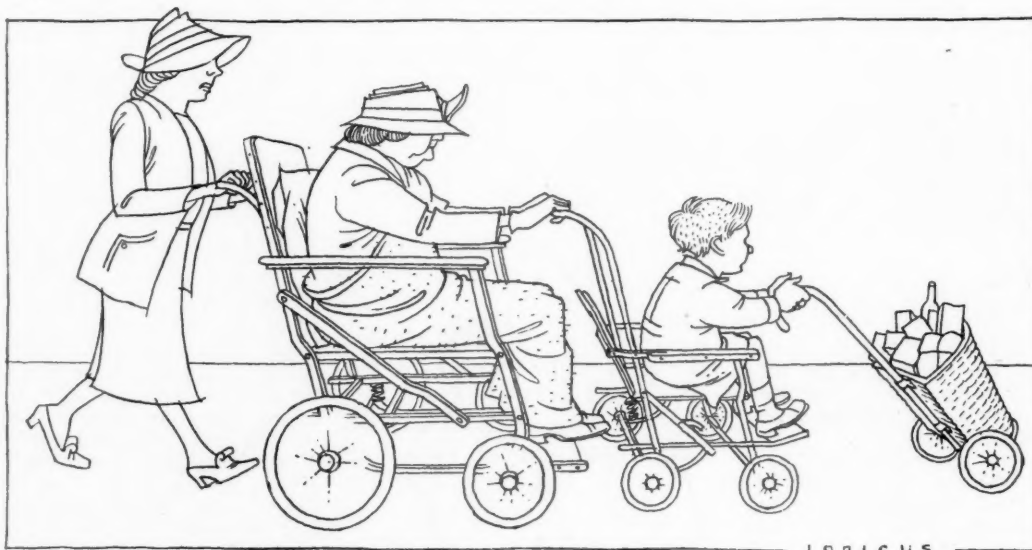
"Reference was made to reports of bad driving seen frequently on Sundays between the 'Wheatsheaf' and the church."

Norfolk paper.

o o

"Drapery.—Young lady required, capable of snupervising."—*Advt. in local paper.*

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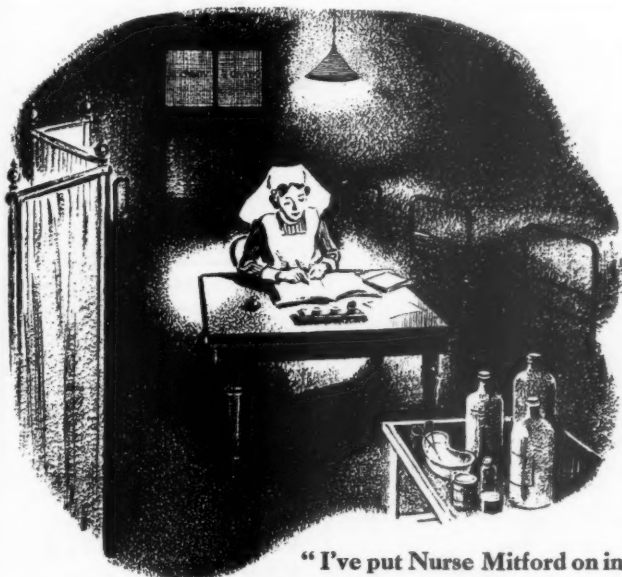


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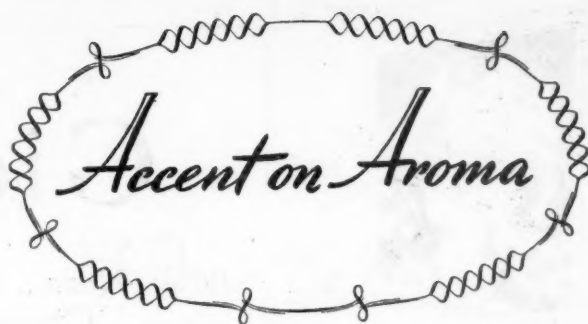
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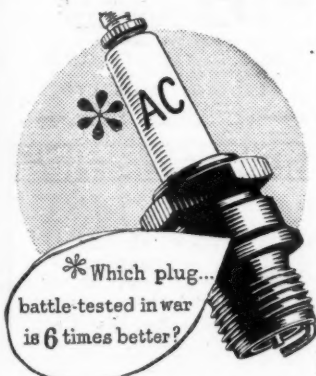
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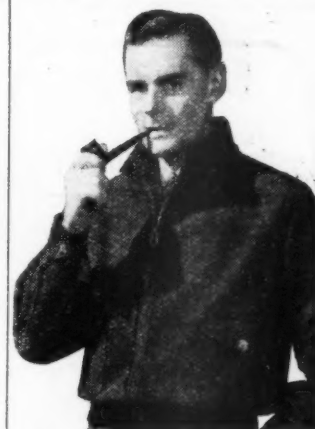
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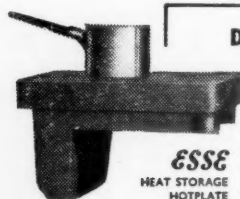
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